



CITY OF AKRON, OHIO

# POLICE DIVISION

PHILIP G. BARNES, CHIEF OF POLICE

NUMBER	DATE OF ISSUE	EFFECTIVE DATE	RESCINDS
P-81-027	April 4, 1984	April 4, 1984	P-81-027, Issued 2/10/81
SUBJECT			ISSUING AUTHORITY
Interpreters for the Hearing Impaired			Chief Philip G. Barnes

Purpose: To inform officers of the procedure to be followed when dealing with hearing-impaired persons.

Introduction: The United States Department of Justice has adopted a change in its Section 504 Regulations. The Department of Justice analysis of this regulation as it relates to law enforcement agencies elaborates on this requirement and the need behind it:

"Law enforcement agencies should provide for the availability of qualified interpreters (certified, where possible, by a recognized certification agency) to assist the agencies when dealing with hearing-impaired persons. Where the hearing-impaired person uses American Sign Language for communication, the term "qualified interpreter" would mean an interpreter skilled in communicating in American Sign Language. It is the responsibility of the law enforcement agency to determine whether the hearing-impaired person uses American Sign Language or Signed English to communicate.

If a hearing-impaired person is arrested, the arresting officer's Miranda warning should be communicated to the arrestee on a printed form approved for such use by the law enforcement agency where there is no qualified interpreter immediately available and communication is otherwise inadequate. The form should also advise the arrestee that the law enforcement agency has an obligation under Federal law to offer an interpreter to the arrestee without cost and that the agency will defer interrogation pending the appearance of an interpreter. (28 C.F.R. Part 42, Sub-part G, Analysis of Department of Justice Regulations, Citation omitted.)"


Procedure: When any officer encounters a hearing-impaired person who is to be arrested for any crime and has difficulty in understanding or being understood, assistance is available from qualified interpreters, 24 hours a day. In cooperation with the Community Services for the Deaf of the Family Service Society of Summit County, we have a list of qualified interpreters on file in the Communications Section.

The arresting officer will attempt to communicate to the arrestee that (s)he is under arrest and will be transported to the police station for interrogation. The arrestee will be given a copy of the form titled "To the Hearing-Impaired Arrestee". If the need for an interpreter is apparent, or if one is requested by the arrestee, signing of this form will be executed in the presence of the interpreter.

The arresting officer(s) will telephone the Community Services for the Deaf office at 376-9494 between 8:30 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday, or Info-Line at 376-6660 at all other times and request that an interpreter be present during interrogation. The officer will advise where the interpreter is needed.

When interviewing a hearing-impaired witness or victim, interpreters are also available and can be contacted the same as is outlined above.

By order of,

  
Philip G. Barnes,  
Chief of Police